

Filed for intro on 05/17/95
House Bill _____
By _____

Senate No. SJR0237
By Atchley

A RESOLUTION to proclaim the third Sunday in October as
"Tennessee Character Counts Week".

WHEREAS, the next generation will be the stewards of our communities, nation and world in critical times, and the present and future well-being of our society requires an involved, caring citizenry with good character; and

WHEREAS, concerns about the character training of children have taken on a new sense of urgency as violence by and against youth threatens the physical and psychological well-being of the nation; and

WHEREAS, more than ever, children need strong and constructive guidance from their families and their communities, including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions and civic groups; and

WHEREAS, the character of a nation is only as strong as the character of its individual citizens, and the public good is advanced when young people are taught that good character counts in personal relationships, in school and in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, scholars and educators agree that people do not automatically develop good character and, therefore, conscientious efforts must be made by youth-influencing

institutions and individuals to help young people develop the essential traits and characteristics that comprise good character; and

WHEREAS, character development is, first and foremost, an obligation of families; efforts by faith communities, schools, and youth, civic and human service organizations also play a very important role in supporting family efforts by fostering and promoting good character; and

WHEREAS, in July of 1992, the Aspen Declaration was written by an eminent group of educators, youth leaders and ethics scholars for the purpose of articulating a coherent framework for character education appropriate to a diverse and pluralistic society; and

WHEREAS, the Aspen Declaration states that “effective character education is based on core ethical values which form the foundation of democratic society: *trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship*”, and these “Six Pillars of Character” transcend cultural, religious, and socioeconomic differences; and

WHEREAS, the Aspen Declaration states that “The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of our society; therefore, every adult has the responsibility to promote the development of good character”; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That this General Assembly endorses the “Six Pillars of Character,” commends the CHARACTER COUNTS COALITION on its goal to strengthen the moral fiber of the next generation, urges State employees to seek out opportunities to incorporate these core ethical values into their work with young people, whether in park and recreation activities, child care programs, community events, or intern and employee training, and encourages all citizens, corporate and individual, to model these traits of good character in an ongoing commitment to promote character development and ethical behavior among the youth of our State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the week commencing the third Sunday in October is hereby designated as “Character Counts Week” in perpetuity, and we call on the people of

this State as well as all interested groups to embrace these Six Pillars of Character and to observe that week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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